

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are pending in the application. Claims 1-3, and 17-19 have been amended. Claims 24-32 have been canceled without prejudice. Favorable reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

I. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indicated allowability of claims 5-16, and 21-23 subject to being amended to independent form. Applicant believes that other pending claims (i.e., claims 1-4, and 17-20) are also in condition for allowance for at least the reasons set forth below.

II. OBJECTIONS TO THE CLAIMS

The claims stand objected to because of informalities. Claims 2, and 18 have been amended in order to address the Examiner's concern. Specifically, claims 2, and 18 now recite a "same ink passage forming member." Such a member is disclosed at, for example, page 8, lines 7-9 of the present specification. No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. In a specific embodiment of the invention defined in claims 2, and 18, the pair of ink passages is disposed inside of a same ink passage forming member, which can be, for example, a ceramic sintered body 130. Therefore, Applicant believes that the claim language in claims 2, and 18 are now clear to those skilled in the art. Withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

III. REJECTIONS OF CLAIMS 1-4, AND 17-20 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-4, and 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,267,468 ("Torgerson"). All pending claims are believed to be allowable for at least the following reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The inventions defined in independent claims 1 and 17 relate to a printing device having a print head, and a print head, respectively. Claims 1 and 17 have been amended to further clarify one of the pertinent features of the invention. Specifically, claims 1 and 17 now require "at least one pair of nozzle arrays for discharging different inks are positioned such that nozzles ... are arranged in a staggered manner and that no nozzles ... are disposed at a same sub-scanning position." For example, in a specific embodiment of the invention shown in Fig. 8, the ink passage 80a for the yellow nozzle array, and the ink passage 80b for the magenta nozzle array are arranged in a staggered manner, i.e., in a way where no nozzles are disposed at a same sub-scanning position.

By contrast, the Torgerson patent fails to teach or suggest the relationship of the pair of nozzles for different inks as claimed. Fig. 1 which was cited by the Examiner shows a print head which has groups 62 and 63 for one color, and groups 61 and 64 for another color (see, column 4, lines 26-37).

First, the nozzles in the groups 62 and 63 of Fig. 1 of Torgerson are in the same color. Therefore, the configuration of the nozzles in the groups 62 and 63 having the same color in Torgerson does not teach or suggest the claimed staggered manner for different inks, i.e., “at least one pair of nozzle arrays for discharging different inks are positioned such that nozzles ... are arranged in a staggered manner ...” as recited in claims 1 and 17. As such, the Torgerson patent does not affect the patentability of claims 1 and 17.

Second, the nozzles in the group 63 are positioned at the same sub-scanning positions as those of the nozzles in the group 64. In other words, the nozzle positions of the group 63 are included in those of the nozzle positions of the group 64 with respect to the sub-scanning direction. Therefore, the Torgerson patent cannot be said to anticipate the claimed feature, i.e., “at least one pair of nozzle arrays for discharging different inks are positioned such that nozzles ... are arranged in a staggered manner and that no nozzles ... are disposed at a same sub-scanning position.” Accordingly, Torgerson cannot be said to anticipate the claimed invention in this regard as well.

Lastly, other possible combinations of the nozzle groups do not show the above-identified relationship of the claimed nozzles in a print head. For at least the reasons set forth above, the invention defined in independent claims 1 and 17, and their dependent claims is believed to be patentable over the cited art. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

IV. CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that all pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance at an early date. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 510-843-6200.

Respectfully submitted,
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Limited Recognition under 37 CFR § 10.9(b)

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